United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name McBride's Harrods Creek Landing

other names/site number JF-2041

2. Location

street & number 5913 River Road | NA | not for publication

city or town Harrods Creek | X | vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Jefferson code 111 zip code 402

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this __X__ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property _X__ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide _X_ local

Signature of certifying official/Title **Mark Dennen, SHPO** Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

McBride's Harrods Creek Landing
Name of Property

Jefferson County, KY
County and State

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

x	private
	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

x	building(s)
	district
	site
x	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
5	1	buildings
1	0	sites
7	0	structures
		objects
13	1	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/single dwelling
Transportation/Water-related
Recreation and Culture/River Camp
Agriculture/barn

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/single dwelling
Transportation/Water-related
Abandoned
Agriculture/barn

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement/Ranch
Other/Stable
Other/concrete house
Other/River front landing
Other/marine railway
Other/barges

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete block
walls: Concrete block
roof: Asphalt shingles
other:

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The McBride's Harrods Creek Landing site ("the Landing", JF-2041) consists of 30 acres of land along the Ohio River and a series of maritime resources. The vessels include four permanently moored barges, one floating dry dock, one crane and one marine railway. The Landing is located at mile point 596 on the left (south) bank of the Ohio River. The Landing is strategically placed near the mouth of Harrods Creek and above the McAlpine Lock and Dam, a location with a still pool and stable water levels. The nominated property is located at 5913 River Road in Harrods Creek, Kentucky, and contains the Leo Birch McBride House, circa 1933, and the George W. McBride House and Barn, circa 1950-1954. There are five contributing buildings, seven contributing structures and one contributing site.

Detailed Description

Evolution of Site Ownership and Character of the Entire Site and Complex

The 30 acres at McBride's Harrods Creek Landing have supported a number of different uses during the Period of Significance, including serving as office and work site for McBride Towing, residence, river camp, and farm. Given the property's location on the Ohio River, deliberate open space, which accommodates the frequent flood waters, is also an important component of the site. The Landing itself is the part of the 1,400-foot-long stretch of river bank, below Riverside Beach, that is used by McBride Towing for the repair, rebuilding and maintenance of its fleet. Part of the advantage of the Harrods Creek Landing site is its location on the still pool above the lock and dam. The topography too, makes it ideal for a fleet, a river camp, and residence. A curving gravel drive winds down toward the river from River Road. The flat land, agriculturally rich, slopes down at a gentle incline to the river. At a line of mature, deciduous trees, the sloping earthen ramp gives way to a flat bottom strip of land, covered with some sand and often, mud, that ends at the seawall. The individual structures that make up the Landing are described below.

The Landing was established in 1933 by Leo Birch McBride as McBride Boat Works, and continued by his son, George W. McBride, who formed McBride Towing in 1955. The McBride family comprises four generations of river pilots, towboat and barge owners and operators that have played a significant role in the development and growth of inland waterway commerce on the Ohio River in Jefferson County between 1933 and 1960.

The devastating flood of 1937, and the subsequent seasonal flooding (anytime between January and the first of May) besieged the site's original dwelling (the Leo Birch McBride house) on the banks of the river. Captain McBride, upon his return from World War II, married and lived in that concrete and frame river front house, but began planning a new house for his growing family. This new house, a concrete block structure, was built on the highest point of the 30-acre site, less than 50 feet from River Road, in order to limit flood damage. To the northwest of the house, Captain McBride constructed a nine-stall horse stable.

Behind the stable, neatly fenced pastures for the horses are located on the south side of the winding road leading to the Ohio River, clearly defined from the agricultural fields on the north side of the road. Early in his career, Captain McBride farmed on the property, but in later years rented the field out to others who raised corn crops. Cottonwood trees line the road leading to Riverside Beach, and at the former river camp, the road forks. It runs north and south, to serve both sides of the river camp, which occupies a strip of land almost 60 feet deep, and runs nearly 1,400 feet long.

Another tree line separates the river camp from the sandy strip of land that leads directly to the fleet and the Ohio River. There, the permanently moored barges, that make up the workforce of a river towing company, are located.

At various times during the year, other components of the McBride Fleet may be found at the Harrods Creek Landing, including numerous towboats and harbor boats. McBride Towing is permitted by the Army Corps of Engineers to keep up to 14 barges, no more than four deep from the seawall, at the Harrods Creek Landing site. Today the McBride Towing Companies own 24 towboats, "three landings, offices, cranes, pile drivers, an enormous floating dry dock, machine shop barges, pumps, trucks and cars: in short, they can provide any needed service on the river."[1]

Description of Individual Features

Harrods Creek Landing (1933) Contributing Site

See Description of site on previous page.

George William McBride House (1950-1952) Contributing Building

The George William McBride House is a one-and-one-half-story concrete block dwelling built on a full walk-out basement. Captain McBride built the house himself over a period of two years, from 1950 to 1952. The form is that of a rectangular side-gable ranch house, with two projecting front gable bays that have cornice returns at either end (Photo 1).

On the weekends, Captain McBride and his wife, Susan, would drive around Louisville looking at homes, and when Susan found one she liked, Captain McBride counted the concrete blocks on the front and side elevations, in order to replicate the size and scale of the house, and set to work. The George William McBride House incorporates some of the elements of the ranch, but not all – there are three bedrooms on the first floor, with additional bedrooms on the second. Most ranch houses are only one-story, but the location of this dwelling within reach of the Ohio River meant that building up was the logical choice.

The George William McBride House illustrates a borrowing from popular suburban architecture, and its transformation, through siting and materials, into a structure worthy of withstanding the ravages of the river – and a form "unique" to riverfront living.[2]

To get as far away from the river as possible, Captain McBride was forced to construct his new house only a few feet from River Road, on the highest point of the site. The realities of living near the Ohio River meant that all of the materials in the new house needed to be as flood-proof as possible. Captain McBride's position with the Ohio River Sand Company meant that he was able to secure the sand and gravel needed at no charge.[3]

With the sand and gravel provided, all he had to do was buy the cement. Mixing it on site with a borrowed mortar mixer proved challenging, as the small mixer was endowed with a "whimsical engine…and

[1] Alan L. Bates, *McBride's River*. (Louisville, Kentucky: Cyclopoedium Press, 2003), 4.
[2] Carolyn Brooks. "Ohio River Recreation," in *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*, ed. John Kleber (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 670.
[3] Personal Conversation with Captain George W. McBride.

was tricky and even dangerous to use." [4] The only wood in the house is the roof, and Captain McBride constructed the roofing system using blueprints provided by his lumber supplier, Boland-Maloney Lumber Company. In addition to mixing and laying the concrete, he did all of the carpentry work, electrical and plumbing.

The area between the two projecting front gable bays on the façade (east elevation) of the house contains an integral porch on metal supports, which shelters the central picture window and entry door. The dwelling is four bays wide, with a window/window/door/window fenestration pattern on the façade. The original windows on the basement level and first story are steel casements, with fixed transoms and concrete sills. The gables on the north and south elevations are clad in aluminum siding and pierced by paired six-over-six double-hung wooden sash windows.

A secondary entrance is located on the south gable end. An interior brick chimney pierces the asphalt shingle roof. The west elevation, like the façade, also features a projecting front gable that contains the kitchen. This side of the house, which faces the river, contains numerous windows on the basement and first floor level (Photo 2). A shed roof dormer on the west elevation provides light to the upper story. A concrete block patio extends the length of the west elevation.

The house measures 55.6 feet across the façade (east elevation), 35.6 feet in length on the north gable end, 55.4 feet across the west elevation (with a 6.6 foot jut-out for the projecting gable on that elevation), and 42 feet long across the south gable end. Originally, the dwelling featured a one-bay garage on the south side of the façade; the young family, which eventually numbered eight children, led to the garage to become converted into a recreation room shortly after construction. Many features – like the garage – place the George William McBride House into the ranch style/form category.

Horse Barn (1954) Contributing Building

Only the gambrel roof of this banked concrete-block and frame horse barn is visible from River Road, as most of the structure is below grade. The nine-stall transverse frame barn, with sliding doors in both the northern and southern ends, opens onto pastures extending down to Harrods Creek Landing (Photos 3 and 4). Each stall is a combination of vertical boards and concrete, with hinged wooden doors and built-in hayracks. The walls between each stall (and the back of each stall) are constructed of concrete, with exception of the slatted boards providing ventilation at the top half of the stall. The stall walls facing on the aisle are frame vertical boards. The end stalls on the east side have windows on the gable ends, while the interior stalls on the east side do not. Each stall on the west elevation has a screened window opening. The southeast stall functions as a tack room.

A poured concrete ramp at the River Road level provides direct access to the loft from the banked side of the barn, through a raised shed roof opening in the roof with double doors. Two small windows on either end illuminate the loft; the gable ends are clad in horizontal wood siding.

Leo Birch McBride House (1933) Contributing Building

This nearly-square (22.5' per side) brick and concrete structure was constructed in 1933 by Leo Birch McBride, after he moved his family from Butchertown to River Road (Photo 6). Originally a two-story dwelling, with a frame second story, the current poured concrete pad with the decorative concrete railing was

[4] Bates, 41.

added in the 1940s, after floodwaters from the 1937 flood rose above the roof of the house. The house is two bays wide, with entrances on both the northern and southern elevations, and large windows on the west and east elevations. The windows are eight-light steel casements flanked by four-light sidelights, and framed by louvered shutters.

The northern and southern elevations have two full-light louvered doors each, positioned at either end. The overhanging eaves are supported by small, triangular concrete brackets. Originally, the southern elevation had a cantilevered screened-in sleeping porch on the second story. An overhang on the western elevation is supported by three concrete columns. A poured concrete walkway wraps around the house.

Leo Birch McBride's house, while later surrounded by a river camp, does not fit perfectly into the context of river camp architecture, as it was not constructed as a seasonal dwelling. The first floor of the dwelling is constructed of poured concrete and brick, while the second story (removed after the 1937 flood went over the roof of the house) was constructed of frame.

Riverside Beach (North Side) River Camp House (circa 1949-1950) Contributing Building

This one-story concrete block house is situated two lots northeast of the Leo McBride House (Photo 7). Almost square in plan, it is typical of the simple cottages erected by the renters of the riverfront lots at Riverside Beach. Three bays wide, it has a door/window/window fenestration pattern on the south elevation, with two-light sliding wooden windows. The east elevation is partially collapsed, and the roof is gone. Despite the deterioration of the structure, it retains enough integrity of site, location and materials to be a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site, as part of the former Riverside Beach Camp.

Riverside Beach (South Side) River Camp House (circa 1949-1950) Contributing Building

This square, one-story concrete block house sits to the south of the Riverside Beach Bar site (Photo 8). It was built by Paul Evola, who with his brothers, ran a successful garage construction business in Louisville and also built many of the concrete block river cottages up and down River Road. Two bays wide, the elevation facing the river (east facade) has a door/window fenestration pattern, with a small concrete stoop in front of the door. The south elevation has one window. The roof has collapsed. Despite the deterioration of the structure, it retains enough integrity of site, location and materials to contribute to our understanding of the former Riverside Beach Camp.

Marine Railway (circa 1958) Contributing Structure

Prior to the purchase of the dry docks, the Harrods Creek Landing utilized what is known as a marine railway, located just to the northeast of the fleet and harbor. Floating dry docks at boatyards are expensive and constantly in demand. The cost associated with using a dry docks is "the same whether the boat is big or not."[5] To repair his boats and save money, Captain McBride retained the services of an engineer friend to design a marine railway. First invented in 1818 by Scotsman Thomas Morton as cheaper alternative to dry docks, a marine railway consists of an inclined plane that extends into the water and a cradle (wooden, and then steel) onto which a boat is floated. The boat is then hauled out of the water and onto the cradle for repair.

The McBride's marine railway consists of a steel carriage "designed to ride rails up the sloped bank of the river at Harrods Creek. Piles were driven, structural steel was bought and used railroad rails were acquired from the scrap yard. The wooden piles had to be cut off to fit with the slope of the rails….Four part sheaves were

[5] Bates, 84.

fitted to the carriage and a deadman in the bank. The pulling power was provided by a farm tractor which was driven across the open field to do the hauling."[6] The wedge-shaped marine railway is 15'8" in length, and rises up to four feet high. Though no longer in use, the marine railway is a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Work barge 1 (Circa 1950) Contributing Object

This welded steel deck barge measures 136 feet by 26 feet (Photo 14). Originally owned and operated by the Coast Guard, the single-hulled barge was used to dispatch buoys. The metal sheeted shop structure on top of the barge was used for repair work and buoy storage. There are four bays on the west elevation of the shop with a window/door/window/window fenestration pattern. The windows are one-over-one double-hung sash. A metal garage bay is located on the north end, while there is a one-over-one double-hung sash window and a door on the south end. A one-bay pilothouse (no longer in use) is located at the north end of the barge. This work barge is the northernmost barge at the Landing. It is a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Work barge 2 (circa 1938) Contributing Object

This riveted steel single-hull deck barge measures 60 feet by 26 feet. It is the smallest of the moored barges at the Landing, and its flat deck does not have any structures (Photo 15). Located just south of *Work Barge 1*, the normal water-level footbridge from the shore leads onto this barge. It is a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Shop barge (circa 1955) Contributing Object

This welded steel single-hull deck barge measures 90 feet by 24 feet. The majority of the barge is taken up by the front gable shop structure (Photo 16). Clad in metal sheeting, with a metal standing seam roof, the shop is three bays wide, with central double doors flanked by single-light sliding windows. The east elevation is pierced by five six-light awning windows; the west elevation has a centrally placed sliding door, fixed single-light windows, and a sliding window. It is a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Jumbo work barge (Circa 1955) Contributing Object

This jumbo hopper barge measures 195 feet by 35 feet (Photo 17). Constructed of welded steel with a compartmentalized single hull, it is the southernmost barge within the proposed National Register boundaries at the Landing. It is a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Dry Docks (circa 1959-1960) Contributing Object

A variety of dry docks have been utilized for boat and ship repair over the years; these dry docks are floating docks that can be moved, rather than stationary dry docks built on land. These floating dry docks measure 140 feet by 70 feet, and are used for the repair and refitting of boats and barges (Photo 18). The dry docks can lift 1,200 tons, and depending on the size and width, a number of vessels can be accommodated in the central bay at one time. Constructed by Slidell Shipyards in Slidell, Louisiana, a major producer of vessels for the war effort in World Wars I and II, the dry docks make the repair of barges and boats much easier than the marine railway.

Constructed of all-welded steel and containing one central bay, the dry docks contain floodable buoyancy chambers that are filled with water when valves are opened, and the dry dock sinks in the water to allow a boat to be moved into position inside the bay. The walls that rise up on either side of the open central

[6] Ibid.

bay give the docks stability while the floor is below the water level. Once a boat is maneuvered into position, the water is pumped out of the chambers, the dry docks rise in the water and the deck is once more above water level, allowing access to the boat's hull. Once the work on the boat is completed, the dry docks are lowered again to allow the boat to float out. It is a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Crane LD311 (1924) Contributing Structure

Built in 1924, and used as a maneuver boat by the Louisville District of the Army Corps of Engineers (COE), this riveted steel crane has a 60-foot high boom and is attached to a deck barge with spuds on either end (Photo 19). The COE used the boat to "raise and lower wickets at the old moveable dams."[7] Originally powered by steam, the crane barge has been converted to a diesel engine. Its lifting capacity is 20 tons. The structure constructed on top of the deck barge consists of a one-story portion and a two-story pilot house. The entire structure is clad in corrugated metal sheeting, but has wooden windows and wooden brackets at the open soffit and wooden rafter tails on the pilot house. The one-story portion is three bays wide, with a window/door/window fenestration pattern on the long sides, and a metal garage bay at one end. Windows are six-over-six double-hung sash, both single and paired. The centrally-located entry consists of a sliding single-slab metal door. The two-level pilot house is comprised entirely of four-light sliding windows on the upper level, and metal sliding doors and six-over-six double-hung wooden sash windows on the lower level. The crane is a contributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Metal storage building (1985)- Noncontributing structure

A modern one-bay wide, front gable, metal storage building is located to the east of the Leo Birch McBride House (Photo 9). It is a noncontributing resource to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

[7] Bates, *McBride's River*, 86.

McBride's Harrods Creek Landing
Name of Property

Jefferson County, KY
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation
Transportation

Period of Significance
1933-1960

Significant Dates
1933, 1950

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
NA

Cultural Affiliation
NA

Architect/Builder
Evola, Paul (builder)
McBride, George William (builder)
McBride, Leo Birch (builder)

Period of Significance (justification)
The Period of Significance for the McBride's Harrods Creek Landing property (JF-2041) covers the pivotal years of the property's development. The beginning date of 1933 coincides with the date of purchase of the parcel by Leo Birch McBride, and the ending date of 1960 was chosen as it is the 50-year threshold established by the NRHP.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

Statement of Significance, Summary Paragraph

The McBride's Harrods Creek Landing property (JF-2041) meets National Register Criterion A and is significant for its association with commercial transportation and with recreation activities on the Ohio River between 1933 to 1960. Specifically, the site is important regionally for its association with inland-waterway commerce during the pivotal years of 1933-1960. The transportation significance is recognized within the historic context, "*Inland-waterway navigation, commerce and industry on the Ohio River at Louisville, Kentucky, 1780-1960.*" The site's significance within recreation comes from its use as a second generation of river camps designed for recreation by Louisvillians and explored within the context "*Recreation, river camps and residential life along River Road, Jefferson County, Kentucky, 1920-1960."*

Narrative Statement of Significance

Historic Context: Inland-waterway Navigation, Commerce and Industry on the Ohio River at Louisville, 1780-1960

The shape, design, and story of Louisville has long been dictated by the Ohio River. From its role as a transportation artery, a conduit of business and commerce, recreational source and an oft-dangerous natural resource, the river's part in the development of Kentucky's largest metropolitan area cannot be overstated. The Ohio River forms the 37-mile long northern and western boundary of Jefferson County, and for the first half of the nineteenth century, it was the region's main transportation corridor.

Louisville occupies a key spot on the Ohio River, which was described by Thomas Jefferson as "the most beautiful river on earth. Its current gentle, waters clear and bottom smooth and unbroken by rocks and rapids, a single instance only excepted."[8] That "single instance" – the Falls of the Ohio—was integral to the founding of the city. The Falls are composed of a series of limestone ledges that stretch across the river and drop more than 25 feet over two miles. During high water and flood stages, the Falls were not visible and the water level reduced the slope, enabling fairly straightforward navigation. But the water levels only reached that height for about two months a year, and "for the remainder of each year the whitewater rapids of the Falls made navigation exceedingly hazardous."[9]

The Falls of the Ohio enabled the development of Kentucky's largest city, but it also obstructed a valuable commercial artery that extended from Pittsburgh to New Orleans. The commercial and economic development of the nation depended upon being able to navigate past the Falls. But until improvements on the Ohio River could be negotiated and implemented between local, state and federal entities, Louisville prospered.

[8] Leland R. Johnson. *The Falls City Engineers A History of the Louisville District Corps of Engineers United States Army.* (Louisville: Corps of Engineers, 1974), 10.
[9] Ibid, 58.

The obstacles presented by the Falls meant that boats had to stop, hire a pilot to safely steer the boat through the Falls, while cargo and passengers were transported by land around the Falls.

In the late-eighteenth century, navigation of the Ohio River was achieved primarily by light vessels such as canoes, dugouts, skiffs and bateaux. For these type of craft, ending up on a sandbar was not a "serious mishap."[10] As traffic on the river increased and deeper-draft vessels were employed, the complaints about the "shallow channels, shifting bars, hazardous rocks and snags and similar obstructions" also increased. [11] The advent of the steamboat, in particular, meant frequent delays caused by these obstructions. Low water became a threat to the commercial future of the river.

The first steamboat reached Louisville in 1811 – and this transportation revolution transformed the Falls City. Between 1820 and 1830, steamboat traffic increased between Louisville and all points north to Pittsburgh. Falls City's businesses supported waterborne commerce, with shipbuilding industries, warehouses to store cargo, hotels for passengers, livery stables, fuel suppliers, banks and insurers, and all matter of merchants supplying provisions and goods for river trips. Agricultural commodities, such as hemp, hogsheads of tobacco, flour, pork and whiskey were shipped from Louisville. The 1820 population of Louisville was triple that of 1810, and by 1830, Louisville was the Commonwealth's largest city. The steamboat provided a foundation for the growth of Louisville's mercantile economy.

The Harrods Creek Landing site would not have developed without the invention of the steamboat and the profession of the river pilots. Captain George William McBride is a third generation river pilot and engineer; his grandfather (also George W. McBride) studied under Captain Horace Bixby, the pilot that tutored Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain. The first generation McBride later spent three months aboard the packet ship *The Imperial* alongside Clemens. [12]

The keelboats and flatboats that plied the river prior to the steamboat ceded their passengers to their faster, more technologically advanced rivals, but they did not disappear from waterborne commerce. Goods and cargo continued to be transported one-way on the Ohio River, and pilots and crew could use a steamboat to return home. Flatboat traffic did not peak until 1847, when 2,792 flatboats were tallied at New Orleans. Some 2,200 of that number hailed from the Ohio Valley. The pilots and crews of the flatboats and keelboats also found work navigating steamboats. [13]

Following the war of 1812, steamboat commerce ballooned, and the growth of Louisville led to a clamor for a bypass alternative to the Falls. Surveys conducted by a former Army engineer named Jared Brooks confirmed that the most direct and shortest route for a canal at the Falls was along the Kentucky side of the river. The politics of the day, however, meant that many early plans for a canal ended in stalemate. It took until 1825 for the Kentucky legislature to decide against a public-owned canal, and they authorized the Louisville and Portland Canal Company, a state-chartered private corporation. The Louisville and Portland Canal was completed in 1830.

Within approximately four months of operation, some 827 boats locked through the new canal. By 1835, traffic through the locks had increased to more than 1,000 vessels annually, and from then until the eve of the Civil War, an average of 1,300 boats a year would pass through the canal. It was evident, however, that the

[10] Ibid, 21.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Bates, *McBride's River*, 1.
[13] Johnson, 30.

canal's useable lifespan would be short. The tolls charged to pass through the canal were considered by many to be exorbitant, and by the 1850s, over 40 percent of the steamboats on the Ohio River exceeded the size of the lock chambers and were unable to pass through the canal.[14] The Louisville and Portland Canal was widened between 1868 and 1872, with the original three locks being replaced with two larger ones. The pool above the Falls was raised by around three feet in 1881 with the construction of a timber-crib dam.[15] Congress authorized a survey of the entire Ohio River in 1866 and the framework for enlarging the canal of 1830 was laid.[16]

Boat-Building in the Falls City

Since the settlement period, boats have been constructed along the banks of the Ohio River in both Louisville and across the river in Indiana. The earliest independent boat-building operations were located on the waterfront on the west side of Louisville, between Sixth and Twelfth Streets; others were located at the Point, which was located across from Towhead Island, between Third and Fourth Streets. [17] Between 1820 and 1830, a number of boat yards were founded, including the Davis Barmore Yard, the Carter and Van Dusen Yard, the Sweeney Brothers Yard, the Robert C. Green Yard, and most importantly, the Howard Shipyard and Dock Company.[18] The latter company, established in 1834, had "yards in Shippingport and on the Point" before settling across the river in Jeffersonville, Indiana.[19]

Although steamboats were the stars of the antebellum river transportation age, the introduction of barges to the nation's inland waterways was a pivotal development in the commercial use of the Ohio River. Milnor Roberts, appointed to carry out the survey of the Ohio River after the Civil War, theorized that the "general substitution of fleets of barges for the former single steamers" would ultimately come to define traffic on the rivers, and carry the "bulk of the freighting."[20] Approximately 1.5 million tons of coal was transported down the Ohio River in 1866.[21] This observation proved on target, and the emergence of barges and towboats as the engines of inland waterway commerce would be the foundation of the Harrods Creek Landing's success as a regional player in the industry.

As the steamboat age gave way to the railroad, and later, to the internal combustion engine, the commercial boat building industry in Louisville began to ebb. Individual operators, such as Captain Leo Birch McBride (hereafter referred to as Captain Birch), would fix up their own boats and barges, but the core of the industry centered in Jeffersonville, Indiana. The Howard Shipyard remained in business under the same name until 1942, when it was sold to Jeffersonville Boat and Machine Company. This company had previously been the J.M. Sweeny shipyard, located below Howard on the river, until it was bought by American Barge Line.[22] The combined shipyards are now known as Jeffboat, and American Commercial Barge Line (ACBL) is a division of CSX. Jeffboat, which today builds and repairs barges and towboats, is one of ACBL's major

[14] Ibid, 69.
[15] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. *Ohio River Navigation Past-Present-Future*. (Cincinnati: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1979), 17.
[16] Johnson, 119.
[17] Alan L. Bates. "Boat-Building," in *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*, ed. John Kleber (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 101-102.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Johnson, 119.
[21] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. *Ohio River Navigation Past-Present-Future*, 19.
[22] Alan L. Bates and Martin C. Striegel, in "Howard Shipyard and Dock Co." *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*, ed. John Kleber (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 407.

subsidiaries. ACBL is "easily the largest towing company on the nation's inland waterways,"[23] with more than 3,300 barges and over 125 towboats.

Jeffboat, across the river from Louisville, is a useful comparison to McBride Towing and the Harrods Creek Landing site. The Jeffboat harbor spans over 5,600 feet of river frontage and encompasses 56 acres of land. The focus of the company is manufacturing – on a national level. While Jeffboat is part of a publicly-traded company, McBride Towing is a regional family-owned operation. Many of the functions carried out by McBride Towing – the harbor service, driving pilings, constructing boat docks – are not services that Jeffboat provides.

During World War II, Jeffboat built over 140 vessels for the Navy, including eight patrol craft, 12 tankers, and 120 Landing Ship Tanks. Since the war, the company has constructed thousands of barges and hundreds of boats. In addition to commercial boats like the towboats, Jeffboat built specialty vessels such as the excursion boats the *Mississippi Queen* and the *General Jackson*.[24]

River Traffic Fades and Changes

As railroads gained importance, the need to cross the river, rather than simply utilize it, became apparent. The first railway bridge spanned the river in 1870; the Louisville Railway Bridge (JFWP-327) was the first of three railway bridges to be constructed in the late-nineteenth century.[25] The Kentucky and Indiana Railroad Bridge (K&I Bridge, JFWP-332) was completed in 1886, while the first incarnation of the Big Four Bridge (JFCB-608), known then as the Louisville and Jeffersonville Bridge, was completed in 1895.

As bridges began arching over the Ohio River, and iron hulled vessels cut through the water, the craft of river piloting also began to change. Up until 1874, river pilots depended on "the positions of trees, bluffs, and other landmarks to guide them in channel."[26] Colonel William E. Merrill directed the placement of beacons and buoys – 150 in all – on the Ohio River in 1875. By 1920, "503 signal lights and daymarkers were in service."[27]

At the turn of the century, the increasing reliance on rail traffic and the growing proliferation of streetcar lines across Jefferson County decreased the Ohio River's role as a transportation route. Well before 1900, Louisville's growth "was due to its rail connections rather than the river."[28] Soon, however, the federal government conceived an ambitious project to canalize the entirety of the Ohio River. A series of locks and dams would traverse the 981-mile river, from its head at Pittsburgh to the mouth of the river in Cairo, Illinois. The new structure at Louisville would become known as Lock and Dam 41, and it "served commerce from 1921 to the 1960s…reflecting the rapid commercial growth of those years and the transition from steamboats to towboats to towboat-barge commerce."[29]

[23] James E. Casto, *Towboat on the Ohio*. (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 16.
[24] Ibid, 16-17.
[25] George H. Yater. "Fourteenth Street (Railroad) Bridge in *The Encyclopedia of Louisville,* ed. John Kleber (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 315.
[26] Michael C. Robinson, *History of Navigation in the Ohio River Basin*. (National Waterways Study, US Army Engineers Resources Support Center Institute for Water Resources, January 1983), 24.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ronald C. Carlisle and William H. Mulligan. "Community Growth, Economic Developments, and the Effects of the Ohio River Navigation System" in *Ohio River Main Stem Context Study*. (Pittsburgh: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2001), 3-60.
[29] Leland R. Johnson and Charles E. Parrish, *Triumph at the Falls: the Louisville and Portland Canal*. (Louisville: US Army Corps of Engineers, 2007), vi.

The first two decades of the twentieth century saw a gradual decline in waterborne commerce, even as the Ohio River canalization project pushed forward. World War I reversed the decline in America's waterborne commercial traffic. The nation's transportation system was overwhelmed by the wartime shipping needs, and the "federal government assumed control of both railroad and waterway traffic."[30] This move increased the confidence of Congress in the inland-waterway system, and following the war, Congress increased appropriations for the canalization project. As construction accelerated, so did the volume of goods transported by the river. Traffic on the river and the amount of products carried, doubled between 1920 and 1930, to some 22.5 million tons. The burgeoning steel and petroleum industries had much to do with this escalation in volume.

Just as river traffic was rebounding, the nation's economy spiraled into the Great Depression. Louisville's diversified economy spared it some of the effects of the Depression, but as banks began to fail, the growth of the city began to slow to a halt. During the worst three years of the downturn (1930-1933), "bank debits to individual accounts stood at $1.24 billion, a mere 49 percent of the peak level attained in 1929…Similarly, the recession which had hit the building industry during the mid-1920s became a depression in the early 1930s. The number of building permits issued annually dropped from an already low figure of 1,107 in 1930 to 675 in 1931, 516 in 1932, and 293 in 1933."[31] The total value of buildings constructed also declined from $6 million in 1930 to approximately $1 million in 1933. Unemployment soared, as 23.5 percent of white workers were looking for work in 1932, while 37.2 percent of African Americans were out of work. [32]

The Flood of 1937

The Ohio River Valley was inundated by one of the most severe floods in the area's history. For a city still recovering from the effects of the Great Depression, the flood of 1937 could not have occurred at a worse time. The rain began on January 6, with nearly an inch accumulation that day. Three days later the rain intensified, and "nearly half the rainfall for a full year fell in one month."[33] The Ohio River first crested two feet above flood stage on January 17, and climbed to a crest of 51.5 feet by January 23. City officials issued ration orders for water, electricity, fuel and food. Electricity in Louisville went out completely on January 24 as floodwaters filled the Waterside electric generating plant. Downtown Louisville, without power for the next four days, functioned virtually as an island. [34]

Outside of Louisville, the flood waters toppled river camps, washed out bridges and stranded scores of livestock. Captain Birch, piloting his towboat the *Kenova*, rescued "some cows trapped on a knoll in southwestern Jefferson County."[35] The cattle did not willingly walk onto the deck barges brought for their rescue, and eventually each one had to be lassoed and towed "aboard using the steam capstan."[36] The unusual tow then made its way to a park on the west side of Louisville.

The Harrods Creek Landing site was completely underwater during the Flood of 1937. The river crested 20 feet above the ridgeline of the Captain Leo Birch McBride House. The contents of the house were loaded onto a small flat barge to wait for the river to recede.

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[30] Ibid.
[31] Kleber, "The Great Depression," 354.
[32] Ibid.
[33] George Yater, *Two Hundred Years at the Falls of the Ohio: A History of Louisville and Jefferson County*. (Louisville: Filson Club Historical Society, 1987), 200.
[34] Aaron D. Purcell. "Flood of 1937," in *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*, ed. John Kleber (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 296-297.
[35] Bates, *McBride's Rive*r, 9.
[36] Ibid.

The Ohio River remained at flood stage for 23 days. When the waters receded in February, the Falls City assessed the extensive damages and began to rebuild. The flood waters submerged more than 60 percent of Louisville; out in the county, some 65 square miles were underwater. Damages totaled more than $50 million, while 90 deaths were recorded as being caused by flood conditions.[37] The ensuing decades brought flood control protections to Louisville and a new way of building along the camps bordering the river.

"World War II changed everything." [38]

Not only did thousands of young men like Captain McBride serve their country overseas, the nature of warfare changed the patterns of water travel. The constant threat of enemy submarines on the eastern seaboard and the very real toll taken on oceangoing vessels led to a new prominence for the nation's inland waterway system. The federal government undertook the construction of 21 Defense Plank Corporation steamboats to ferry goods and products on the rivers, thus avoiding the dangers of the coast and sea. The recent canal improvements on the Ohio River aided the war efforts by "providing industries with low-cost, dependable transportation."[39] In 1942, 38 million tons of goods were transported on the Ohio River – on "a system of locks and dams planned in 1910 to handle 13 million tons annually."[40] The construction of both Markland Dam and McAlpine Lock would not have been possible without the million tons of sand and gravel delivered by barges towed by McBride Towing Company.

The towboat pushing barges up and down the river are one of the invisible backbones of the American economy. Towboats are flat-fronted powerful boats that push barges on rivers. Most towboats have flat hulls to accommodate the shallow depths of inland waterways. Harbor boats assist ships in maneuvering through harbors and helping ships docks and undock within a confined space. Harbor boats use short towlines and push much larger vessels. Barges, which carry the tons of coal and petroleum used across the nation, come in three different sizes and a variety of styles, depending on the type of cargo they are designed to carry.

The industrial boom that followed World War II helped reshape the Ohio River. Between 1946 and 1953, some 2,500 new industrial companies located their headquarters in the Ohio Valley. These steel, aluminum, chemical and steam-electric industries constructed plants alongside the Ohio River to take "advantage of low-cost waterways transportation and reliable water supply; and their location in the Ohio Valley had a 'rippling' effect, attracting secondary industry to the region to use the primary products and power produced at riverside."[41] Barges can hold the equivalent of 15 railroad cars or more than 60 tractor trailers – those trucks can carry a ton of coal not quite 60 miles on a gallon of fuel while a tow can carry that same ton 513 miles.[42]

The new industries created a traffic jam at the Louisville and Portland Canal. In 1950, there were 48,598,000 tons of traffic moved on the Ohio River. Just "as the Civil War helped stir interest in construction of the Ohio River's initial navigation system, so World War II underscored the desperate need for that system's modernization."[43] The push of industry and the congestion on the Ohio River led the Corps of Engineers to

[37] Purcell, 297.
[38] Personal conversation with Captain G.W. McBride.
[39] David C. Berg. "Political Factors and Military Influences on the Development of Ohio River Navigation Improvements," in *Ohio River Main Stem Context Study*. (Pittsburgh: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2001), 2-56.
[40] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. *Ohio River Navigation Past-Present-Future, 36.*
[41] Johnson, 233.
[42] Casto, 4.
[43] Casto, 48.

undertake yet another rebuilding phase at the Falls in 1958. Ultimately, a new lock was constructed, the old locks were rehabilitated and the canal widened from 200 feet to 500 feet. Renamed the McAlpine Locks and Dam in 1960, the new and improved navigation system would last until the mid-1990s, when cargo rates necessitated yet another stage of expansion and modernization.

A review of the navigation charts for the Ohio River from Cairo, Illinois to Foster, Kentucky, shows that around 20 industries, including GE, Texaco, Ashland Oil, Chevron, and National Carbide Corporation, are located in Jefferson County along the Ohio River.[44] General Electric located its state-of-the-art Appliance Park in Louisville in 1951 because of the "availability of year-round water transportation for steel from Pittsburgh to Louisville."[45] In recent years, United Parcel Service "chose Louisville as its major air hub because of the availability of river shipping for jet fuel."[46] Numerous non-industrial entities are located along the river bank as well, including marinas, boat clubs and harbors associated with river camps. Within Jefferson County, there is a single riverside site—the McBride's site—that incorporates a commercial river function with a river camp site and residence. [47]

The Beginning of McBride Towing

By the late 1920s, Captain Birch was seeking new ways to make his living from working on the river. Prior to forming the Koch-McBride Towing Company in conjunction with his father-in-law, Jacob Koch, Captain Birch worked as a pilot on the excursion steamer *America*, which could hold 3,800 people. The developing barge industry, however, looked promising for a river pilot that held licenses as master/pilot and engineer.[48] He acquired his first towboat, a stern wheel named the Conqueror, by salvaging the boat after it was "capsized and sunk by a windstorm."[49]

Before the Stock Market crash of 1929, Captain Birch owned around five boats and 20 barges, and worked as a contract tower. Captain Birch had the "misfortune to own these boats during the worst depression of the nation's history."[50] His main line of work at the time was towing coal on the Kanawha River. The economic depression pushed coal prices down, coal companies could not pay miners, and they also couldn't pay the pilots for towing their coal.

After the Depression, Captain Birch actively began looking for land to purchase on the Ohio River. The Harrods Creek site became not only his residence, but the birthplace of his new business venture. According to his son, George William McBride (Captain McBride), he "was in the right place at the right time." He purchased the 30 acres at Harrods Creek Landing in 1933, and moved his family from East Washington Street in Butchertown to the two-story house of concrete, brick, and frame he built on the banks of the river. He would then buy a boat, bring it to Harrods Creek Landing and fix it up. Slowly, Captain Birch began to rebuild a fleet. In 1936, "his occupation was listed as a boat builder and after 1937 he was termed president of the Reliance Machine Company at Harrods Creek."[51]

[44] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Navigation Charts, Ohio River, Louisville District. Charts 70-76.
[45] Carlisle and Mulligan, 3-60.
[46] Ibid.
[47] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chart 76 and Chart 87 (2000).
[48] Bates, *McBride's River*, 5.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid, 3.
[51] Ibid.

Following the death of Captain Birch in 1945, and his own return from World War II, Captain McBride and his mother operated a river camp known as Riverside Beach, as well as a tavern, Riverside Beach Bar. The tavern and the river camp persisted into the 1960s, at which time the growth of the Harrods Creek Landing fleet began to obscure access to and views of the river. Since river transport was the McBride's main source of income, he closed the river camp and tavern.

After the loss of Jeffboat's *Republic No. 1* in the early 1950a, large industries faced the possibility of goods not being delivered, and high costs associated with any delay in harbor service. E.L. McClanagan and E.A. Berry, two Standard Oil dealers, formed a partnership with Captain McBride, to start up a new harbor service in West Louisville. This was the beginning of McBride Towing – a chance event left by an opening in the industry, and Captain McBride made the most out of this opportunity.

The new harbor service was underway, managing the switching of "all of the landings below the falls at Louisville." [52] These landings included "Ashland Oil, Standard Oil, Gulf Oil, Louisville Refining, Stauffer Chemical, Roehm & Haas, and power plants for Louisville Gas & Electric and Indiana Public Service."[53] In addition the harbor service, Captain McBride worked virtually around the clock to establish his business, taking on jobs driving piles, washing out slips at the boat clubs up and down the river, towing cement, building and repairing boat docks, as well as running the river camp and bar at the Harrods Creek Landing site. The first towboat that Captain McBride was able to purchase was a 330-horsepower boat named the *Paul B.*

McBride Towing played a key role in the construction of both the John F. Kennedy and Sherman Minton bridges over the Ohio River – the company's barges were utilized for the core drilling in the construction of the bridges. The pilings for the docks, the boat slips, and marinas that line the shore along River Road – including the Louisville Boat Club, Rose Island Yacht Club, Harrods Creek Marina, and American Turners -- were all driven by McBride Towing.

In the early 1980s, many independent towing and harbor-service firms began to go out of business, due to a decrease in freight rates because of high interest rates and an oversupply of barges. According to John Shoulberg, editor of Waterways Journal, a weekly trade publication, stricter waterways regulations added to overhead costs such as maintenance and operating. The number of independent river operations decreased by 50 percent since the early 1980s.[54] The Harrods Creek Landing site, and its capacity for rebuilding and repairing boat and barges, enabled Captain McBride to stay in business.

There is generally one harbor outfit per town.[55] The McBride Towing Company is Louisville's. Paducah, Kentucky, located at the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers, is a larger switching town than Louisville. The James Marine Company is the harbor outfit in Paducah; this large company has acquired numerous other operations over the years, and traces its earliest roots to the Walker Towing Corporation, which began in 1945.[56]

Evaluation of the significance of McBride's Harrods Creek Landing within the historic context "Inland-waterway navigation, commerce and industry on the Ohio River at Louisville, Kentucky, 1780-1960"

[52] Bates, *McBride's River*, 45.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Personal Conversation with Captain George W. McBride.
[56] Ibid.

Just as Captain McBride's career "coincided with the transition from steam paddlewheels to diesel propellers," the development of the Harrods Creek Landing site coincided with a period of unprecedented growth on the nation's inland waterways, and improvements to that navigation system. As the only family-owned, independent towing and harbor business in Louisville, the Harrods Creek Landing site illustrates many facets of how companies operated successful commercial transport businesses on and near the Ohio River between 1930 and 1960.[57] The Harrods Creek Landing site is material reminder of the pivotal role that the Ohio River still plays in transporting many of the goods that provide the services of daily life: coal, petroleum, sand and gravel. The barges and towboats that move these goods and serve the industries that line the Ohio River are the workhorses of industry in America, and the repair and rebuilding of those vessels at Harrods Creek is a necessary part of ensuring that this transportation artery keeps delivering goods.

The McBride's Harrods Creek Landing is the sole identified example of its type in Louisville and Jefferson County. McBride Towing, which consists of three separate companies owned by the family providing barge services, is the only independent business of its type in Louisville. The 1,400 feet of river front, which includes the Harrods Creek Landing, and the 30-acre parcel consisting of the Leo McBride House, and the George W. McBride House and barn, is a singular type of resource along River Road.

The McBride's Harrods Creek Landing site not only tells the story of a family intertwined with the river, but also a small part of the story of the Ohio River and its relationship with the Falls City. The Ohio River carries more commercial cargo than the Panama Canal,[58] but few people are aware of the industry that supports the traffic that travels the 981-mile length of the river. Approximately 65 percent of the coal mined in Kentucky and West Virginia is brought to market on the Ohio River, while 20 percent of the nation's electricity is generated by power plants along the banks of the river.[59] In 2008, 98 million tons of commodities were moved on inland waterways within Kentucky – with a value of over $10.1 billion dollars. Coal made up 47 percent of that, while aggregates comprised 28 percent and petroleum 10 percent. [60] On the entire Ohio River system, over 270 million tons of products were moved in 2008.[61]

The towboats and barges that make the transport of cargo and commodities possible are piloted by members of the McBride family, who in turn have been using the Harrods Creek Landing site for the past 77 years to rebuild and repair boats and barges. Though the structures and buildings at the site may not appear architecturally significant, their utilitarian guise provides a lens with which to explore the river during almost 30 years of the twentieth century. The landing itself, with its collection of work barges, crane and dry docks, reveals the practical side of an industry that most people are only vaguely aware of when they spot a barge loaded with coal heading up or down the river.

Evaluation of the integrity of McBride's Harrods Creek Landing within the historic context "Inland-waterway navigation, commerce and industry on the Ohio River at Louisville, Kentucky, 1780-1960"

In order for a site meeting Criterion A, and important for its association with inland waterway navigation, commerce, and industry to be eligible, it should retain integrity of site, setting, location and association. The connection and relationship to the river and its commercial traffic should be recognizable. Given the frequent rebuilding along the river, it is not expected that a site should remain pristine, but any new

[57] Cynthia Wilson, "Family Ties Help Firms Keep Rolling on the River." *Louisville Courier-Journal,* December 7, 1997, E1.
[58] Casto, 4.
[59] Ibid.
[60] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Available online at: http://www.lrd.usace.army.mil/navigation/ohioriver/
[61] Ibid.

development or construction should be sympathetic to the historic. The Harrods Creek Landing Site exhibits the physical components, spatial organization and historic associations originally affiliated with the landing and river front. All seven integrity factors should be examined.

Location
The Harrods Creek Landing Site retains a high level of integrity of location. The landing, in particular, represents the development of the early-twentieth-century river commerce on the Ohio River. Though floods have no doubt impacted the shoreline, the topography and accessibility of the site to the river remain unchanged. The extant buildings have not been relocated, and they retain their relationship with the entire parcel, including the gravel road, the tree-lined fields and the river front.

Design
The Harrods Creek Landing site, given its location above the Falls of the Ohio, has many natural advantages, which were incorporated into the site's functional arrangement to make the property perform well as McBride Boat Works, and later, as McBride Towing. The road leading from River Road to the Ohio River remains intact, while the marine railway made use of the natural slope of the river bank to haul boats and barges up out of the river for repair.

Materials
The integrity of the materials associated with the actual landing retain a high level of integrity. Most of the materials used in the construction of barges, dry docks and cranes is steel. Given the wear of the river on any material, hulls have to be repaired, but the material remains the same. The materials chosen for both dwellings and barns reflects the relationship of the built environment to the river, and the concrete and steel windows are intact, and help convey the reality of living with the constant threat of flooding.

Workmanship
The Harrods Creek Landing site has a high level of integrity of workmanship. The moored barges may not be typical objects of artisan beauty, but the amount of labor and craft involved in creating and maintaining the barges of the McBride's fleet requires careful attention to every seam and rivet in the metal of the barges, dry docks, and cranes. Over the years, as barges have had to had hulls repaired and replaced, the completed work is identical (with the exception of improvements in technology) to the original construction.

Setting
The Harrods Creek Landing site has a high level of integrity of setting. The setting of the landing and the river is identical to 1933 when Captain Birch began towing boats there for repair. Water levels rise and fall, but the gently sloping bank to the river has not been altered. The trees that line the curving drive from River Road are intact. The intact setting further reinforces the rural setting and the site's relationship with transportation – both the river and River Road.

Feeling and Association
The Harrods Creek Landing site retains a high level of integrity of feeling and association. In the same family since 1933, there is no mistaking the site's relationship with inland waterway navigation and commerce. The landing, with its barges, crane and dry docks, is a visible reminder of the industry that the river supports.

Historic Context: Recreation, River camps and Residential Life along River Road, Jefferson County, Kentucky, 1920-1960

From the latter part of the nineteenth century, the part of Jefferson County east of Louisville became a desirable place, first to the rich who lived there as commuters, and later as a place for middle-class people to visit for recreation.

As automobile ownership increased among the general public, driving along River Road, adjacent to the Ohio River, became a popular past time, as did visiting one of the city's riverfront parks. Amusement parks catering to the new middle class developed along the river, including Rose Island, which was created in 1924 by Louisville businessman D.B.G. Rose. Located on the Indiana shore, Louisville residents could take a steamboat or ferry from downtown Louisville or from a harbor at the end of Rose Island Road in Prospect. The park featured a swimming pier, swimming pool, a small zoo, tennis courts, rental cabins, a miniature golf course and rental rowboats. [62]

River camps, designed for weekend or summer recreation activities, replete with small cabins parallel or perpendicular to the river and the "beach," sprang up along the banks of the Ohio River and Harrods Creek. Brooks describes the process of developing river camps:

> Beginning in the 1910s and rapidly developing through the 1920s and 1930s in the Louisville area, many beach-front communities were built directly along the Ohio riverbanks on both sides of the river and on many of the islands within its banks. Some of these cabins or 'camps' were built in groups by land owners and rented to summer tenants. Others were individually built by families on leased land. Still others were constructed on land that had been subdivided for purchase so that each owner built a cabin on his own small lot.[63]

The majority of historic river camps in Jefferson County occurred along the River Road corridor. As part of the Louisville Southern Indiana Ohio River Bridges Project Survey Update (LSIORB Project), the author of this nomination surveyed all of River Road from Zorn Avenue to the junction of River Road at US Highway 42 in Prospect, a seven-mile corridor. Ten have been conclusively identified as operating during the 1910-1960 time period. Eight of these camps are either still extant, or, like Riverside Beach, contain distinguishable ruins on an intact site. The McBride site was the only site within this corridor with the combination of resources including a harbor and fleeting facility, former river camp, and historic residential buildings.

The general layout of the river camps along River Road shows a remarkable similarity. Most feature a long entranceway from River Road, often with gateposts or signs marking the entry. Typically, the long drive passes through undeveloped land on either side, which would have been used for recreational purposes. At American Turner's, a baseball field, swimming pool and tennis courts have been developed. The entry drive then splits, with access drives running parallel to the river, both to the west and east. The cabins are typically sited parallel to the river, with outbuildings on the opposite side of the access drive that runs west to east. The cabins at American Turners are arranged in a row perpendicular to the river, against the west side of the property line. Occasionally, some structures have been built on the south side of these access drives (such as at

[62] Brooks, 1997, 13.
[63] Carolyn Brooks in "Ohio River Recreation," in *The Encyclopedia of Louisville,* ed. John Kleber (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 670.

Waldoah Beach), but typically the space is reserved for parking spaces, outbuildings or picnic/grilling areas. The lots slope gently down to the river, and most camps either have many boat slips or small docks, or both. The calm water on the east side of the McAlpine Lock and Dam enables property owners to dock their boats on the river without fear of water levels changing drastically except during flood seasons. The camp structures themselves – as well as those situated a bit further back from the river, fronting on River Road, follow predictable patterns of form, construction and materials.

Residential Architecture Along the River

There is evidence of several building and rebuilding campaigns within the river camps, a process that continues today. Most extant examples along River Road have construction dates ranging from the 1930s to the late 1950s. Construction in the river camps was constrained and limited, for the most part, to three types of dwellings. Typically, one-story frame structures built on high pier foundations were among the first generation of resources constructed; most of these were summer residences only. Their overall scale was small, with only two to three rooms inside. There was always a porch on the façade and usually one at the rear of the dwelling as well. Due to the ravages of the river, many of these small wooden resources have been replaced, but a few remain. This first generation of river camp resources includes those built between 1920 and 1937.

The second type of recreational architecture dates from the 1930s through the 1950s and consists of one-story concrete block or brick structures built on continuous foundations. These were also intended for summer use, but some have been modified for year-round living. Many of these resources had flat roofs, porches on the façade and rear elevations, and a spare aesthetic. The second generation of river camp resources overlaps slightly with the first. This second building campaign may reflect the increased wealth of individual owners and their more year-round use of the camp. This type ranges in construction from 1935-1950.

The last type of recreational architecture found along the river included the more expansive poured concrete and brick dwellings, which allowed residents to live along the river year round. Usually two stories high, with steel windows (often a combination of fixed and casement), these structures represented an evolution in river camp architecture, with improvements in materials and form, to enable them to weather repeated flooding. These dwellings also incorporated more stylistic details than the other two types. This substantial type of recreational architecture was usually constructed by residents with more disposable income, and often in river camps developed as playgrounds for wealthy Louisvillians. This last type of river camp resource was constructed between 1940 and 1960.

Although these are the three most common examples of recreational architecture found along the river, typical residential forms from the first quarter of the twentieth century, such as Bungalow, were also adapted. The frame bungalow at 2809 Waldoah Beach (JF-1925) is one example. Ranch style homes, with their simple rectangular footprint, lent themselves well to the concrete block construction along the river, such as the one-story, three-bay-wide example at 5617 Juniper Beach Road (JF-2000).

The rebuilding campaign continues in the present day. Many early structures have been extensively remodeled with new fenestration and cladding materials, raised higher off of the ground, and generally adapted to serve as year-round residences. Though these resources may not appear historic from the exterior, it is likely that modern materials surround a historic core.

Individual River Camps

The identified river camps along the seven-mile corridor of River Road include, moving west to east:

American Turners (Turner's Beach)
Waldoah Beach
Eifler's Beach
Juniper Beach
Camp Tapawingo (Young Men's Hebrew Association)
Riverside Beach
Guthrie Beach
Merriwether Camp (on Harrods Creek, not the river)
Transylvania Beach
Shirley Beach
Beachland Beach

Riverside Beach, which was located on the nominated property, started after World War II as a way for Captain McBride and his family to derive some income from their tow boat property following the death of Captain Birch in 1944. Captain McBride claims the idea for the camp came from the Guthries (Guthrie Beach), the adjacent property owners, and that the tavern was "a good money maker in the summertime." [64] Riverside Beach "catered mainly to recreational boaters, but also to the rough-neck quarrymen of Utica, Indiana, directly across the river."[65]

Captain McBride and his mother divided the river frontage into 20-21 lots of roughly 35-50 feet long. The lots were narrow, and the size depended on whether the renter wanted to construct a cabin or simply bring down a mobile trailer on the weekend. The rates charged depended on the size of the lot; an account book from the 1960s shows that the rates ranged from $65 for the year upwards to $175 annually.[66] There were only six lots on the northern side of Riverside Beach, with the remainder located on the tavern side of the beach. There was never the amount of permanent or semi-permanent construction at Riverside Beach as at some of the other camps, so the retention of extant structures does not offer as much at this location as at others to help our understanding of the site's association with the river camp context.

Evaluating the Significance of McBride's Harrods Creek Landing within the context "Recreation, River camps and Residential Life along River Road, Jefferson County, Kentucky, 1920-1960"

The LSIORB Project resulted in the survey of all of the river camps along River Road between Zorn Avenue and the intersection of US 42 and River Road in Prospect. This work, along with the research and survey work conducted by Carolyn Brooks, shows that it is virtually impossible for historic resources to remain intact and unaltered due to the devastation wreaked by the Ohio River. The cottages that line the shores of the Ohio River have been destroyed, rebuilt and destroyed again. Many dwellings do retain historic materials, as well as their their massing and form. However, modern construction within the historic river camps is often intrusive and out-of-scale. A Multiple Property Documentation Form is likely the best avenue for exploring and recording the totality of historic river camps of Jefferson County between 1920 and 1960.

[64] Personal Conversation with Captain George W. McBride.
[65] Bates, *McBride's River*, 41.
[66] The account book dates from 1964 to 1972. At that time, the McBride Towing Company and the fleet at Harrods Creek had increased in size so that access to the river for the campers was no longer possible.

The George W. McBride House, sited on the highest point of the parcel, shows how the suburban styles of the post-World War II period were adapted for river front living. The house and barn themselves are significant types along the River Road corridor – the stable is one of the few agricultural outbuildings located on the river side of the corridor. The traditional form of the stable is modernized with the concrete block construction that marks this site as a property influenced by and shaped by the Ohio River.

The river camp is still visible on the landscape with an intact setting, cottonwood trees shading the camp lots, and two camp cabins (in addition to the Leo Birch McBride House), still marking the parallel layout of the camp. The camp, along with the Riverside Beach Bar, played an important role in the development of Ohio River-related recreation in the early- to mid-twentieth century.

It is not known whether other river pilots owned property alongside the Ohio River in Jefferson County, and made a living there, serving on the river and catering to the whims of the vacationers and boaters who flocked to its shores. Archival evidence reveals that no one else entered the market at the same time Captain Leo Birch McBride did, nor did a family business develop a harbor business linked with some of the biggest industries in the Ohio River Valley. Survey work did not identify any sites, either along River Road, or in southwest Jefferson County, that were similar to the Harrods Creek Landing site.

Evaluating the Integrity of McBride's Harrods Creek Landing within the context "Recreation, River camps and Residential Life along River Road, Jefferson County, Kentucky, 1920-1960"

In order for a river front site associated with Ohio River recreation and residential life to be eligible for listing, it should retain integrity of site, setting, location and association.

There are characteristics that link the river camps and define their significance. The integrity of setting, location, feeling and association of many of the river camps remain high and should be factored into any evaluation of a camp's overall integrity. The layout of river cottages, nearly always parallel to the river, and the similarity in the approach to and connection with the river, should remain intact. The original plat, if there was one, should be consulted to determine if any of the original lots have been subdivided. Ideally, the lots should be the same size as when the camp was first developed and the dwelling sited on the lot as it was originally. The materials of the buildings should be as original as possible, either concrete or brick – new construction, if present, should be sympathetic in cladding, form and size to the historic aspects of the lot and the camp.

The Harrods Creek Landing Site exhibits the physical components, spatial organization and historic associations originally affiliated with the landing and river front. Although many of the river camp structures are now gone, Riverside Beach retains its integrity of setting, feeling and association. All seven integrity factors are examined.

Location

The Harrods Creek Landing Site retains a high level of integrity of location. The extant buildings have not been relocated, and they retain their relationship with the entire parcel, including River Road, the pastures, tree-lined agricultural fields, Riverside Beach and the Ohio River. The location of the parcel enabled its development as a river-based business and recreational resource.

Design

The three buildings at the Harrods Creek Landing site retain a very high level of design. The massing and floor plan of the George W. McBride house remain intact, with the exception of the garage conversion into a

recreation room (a change that occurred during the Period of Significance). The stable has been little altered, and though it does not currently house horses, its loft, stall and tack room space are intact. The Leo Birch McBride house has undergone some modifications since construction, a reality of the river front location. The frame second story has been removed, and the interior space is no longer divided into rooms. It is recognizable, however, as a product of the 1930s and 1940s river camp architecture along River Road. Riverside Beach, with its line of trees, and slight shifts in topography, is recognizable as a former river camp.

Materials

The integrity of the materials at the Harrods Creek Landing site is very high; many of the materials in the three buildings on the site remain unchanged since their installation. The concrete block, with its rounded corner edges, of the George W. McBride House, is intact, while all of the windows, save the one in the former garage bay, are original to the 1950-1952 time period. The concrete block and wood utilized in the stable is intact, and the brick and concrete of the Leo Birch McBride House is intact, as are the steel casement windows. All of the materials were chosen with thoughts of the river and what flooding does to buildings. The concrete and steel would withstand flood waters and could be easily cleaned.

Workmanship

The Harrods Creek Landing site has a high level of integrity of workmanship, particularly the George W. McBride House and Stable, which were built by Captain McBride. The concrete is sound, and laid well, and the small details like the oculus window in the gable show that the craft that produced the dwelling is very intact.

Setting

The Harrods Creek Landing site has a high level of integrity of setting. Though some development has taken place on either side of the 30 acres, but the topography of the subject, the intact viewshed to the river, and mature tree lines provide a sense of enclosure for the parcel. The barn and fields, clearly demarcated by plank fencing, remain intact. Although a few of the structures along Riverside Beach have been demolished or are in a state of ruins, enough remains to clearly identify the site as part of the river camp context. The intact setting further reinforces the rural setting and the site's relationship with transportation – both the river and River Road.

Feeling and Association

The Harrods Creek Landing site retains a high level of integrity of feeling and association. In the same family since 1933, there is no mistaking the site's relationship with the Ohio River. The Riverside Beach site, with two near ruins and the Leo Birch McBride House marking the clearly delineated row of river camp lots, still feels like a river getaway. The George W. McBride House, with its ranch form, retains its association with post-World War II development along River Road.

Developmental history/additional historic context information Above

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): JF-2041

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 30.0 acres
Jeffersonville quad
Coordinates calculated by GIS (KYGEONET)
Coordinates expressed below according to NAD 27
UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	618 525	4243 130
2	16	618 384	4242 680
3	16	618 676	4242 457
4	16	618 849	4242 731

Verbal Boundary Description

The property consists of all of Parcel W00700300000 (Land Record Serial Number 8107165) and Parcel W00700670000 (Land Record Serial Number 2757), recorded at the Jefferson County Clerk's Office on August 14, 2002, Deed Book 7940, page 740.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property proposed for inclusion on the National Register by the current nomination includes the 30 acres purchased by Leo Birch McBride in 1933. This nominated property retains the historic dwellings constructed by Leo Birch McBride and his son, George W. McBride. The proposed boundaries provide an appropriate setting for understanding the significance of the site with the contexts of river commerce and riverside recreation within Jefferson County within the periods of significance. The boundary includes the Landing with the fleet, Riverside Beach, the agricultural fields and fenced pastures, and the domestic yard around the George W. McBride House, and maintains the historic setting in which the Landing was developed.

McBride's Harrods Creek Landing | Jefferson County, KY
Name of Property | County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janie-Rice Brother, Senior Architectural Historian
organization Kentucky Archaeological Survey date
street & number 1020A Export Street telephone
city or town Lexington State KY 40506-9854 zip code
e-mail janie-rice.brother@uky.edu

Photographs:

Name of Property: McBride's Harrods Creek Landing
City or Vicinity: Harrods Creek
County: Jefferson State: Kentucky
Photographer: Janie-Rice Brother
Date Photographed: November 2009, July 2010-September 2010

Given the complexity of the site, with resources located across the 30-acre parcel and in the Ohio River, five additional photos have been submitted to adequately address the landscape features and built environment of the McBride's Harrods Creek Landing

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. View of the south gable end and façade (east elevation) of the George W. McBride House, facing north.
2. West elevation of the George W. McBride House, facing east.
3. North and west elevations of the horse barn, facing south.
4. Pastures behind the George W. McBride House and horse barn, facing northeast.
5. Curvilinear gravel drive that leads from River Road to Riverside Beach and the Landing, facing southwest.
6. West and south elevations of the Leo Birch McBride House, facing northeast.
7. South elevation of the Riverside Beach River Camp House (North Side), facing north.
8. North and west elevations of the Riverside Beach River Camp House (South Side), facing south.
9. Noncontributing metal building, facing southeast.
10. Riverside Beach, facing south. The tree line on the right separates the river camp from the Landing.
11. West elevation of the Leo Birch McBride House and Riverside Beach, as seen from the Ohio River. The fleet is at the right in photo. Facing east.
12. Drive leading down to the Landing and fleet. Facing west.
13. The moored fleet and towboats, as seen from the Ohio River. Facing southwest.
14. Work barge 1, facing northeast.
15. Work barge 2, facing northeast.
16. Shop Barge, with high water footbridge, facing southwest.
17. Jumbo work barge, facing northeast.
18. West wall of the dry docks, with the Crane LD311 inside, as seen from the Ohio River. Facing east.
19. Crane LD311, facing southwest, with pilothouse in foreground.
20. High water footbridge and the Landing, with the fleet on left side of photo. Facing northeast.

Property Owner:

Name Captain George W. McBride
street & number 3404 Glenview Avenue telephone
city or town Louisville state KY zip code 40222

CLYDE
MTC

24
THINK SAFE
WORK SAFE
BE SAFE

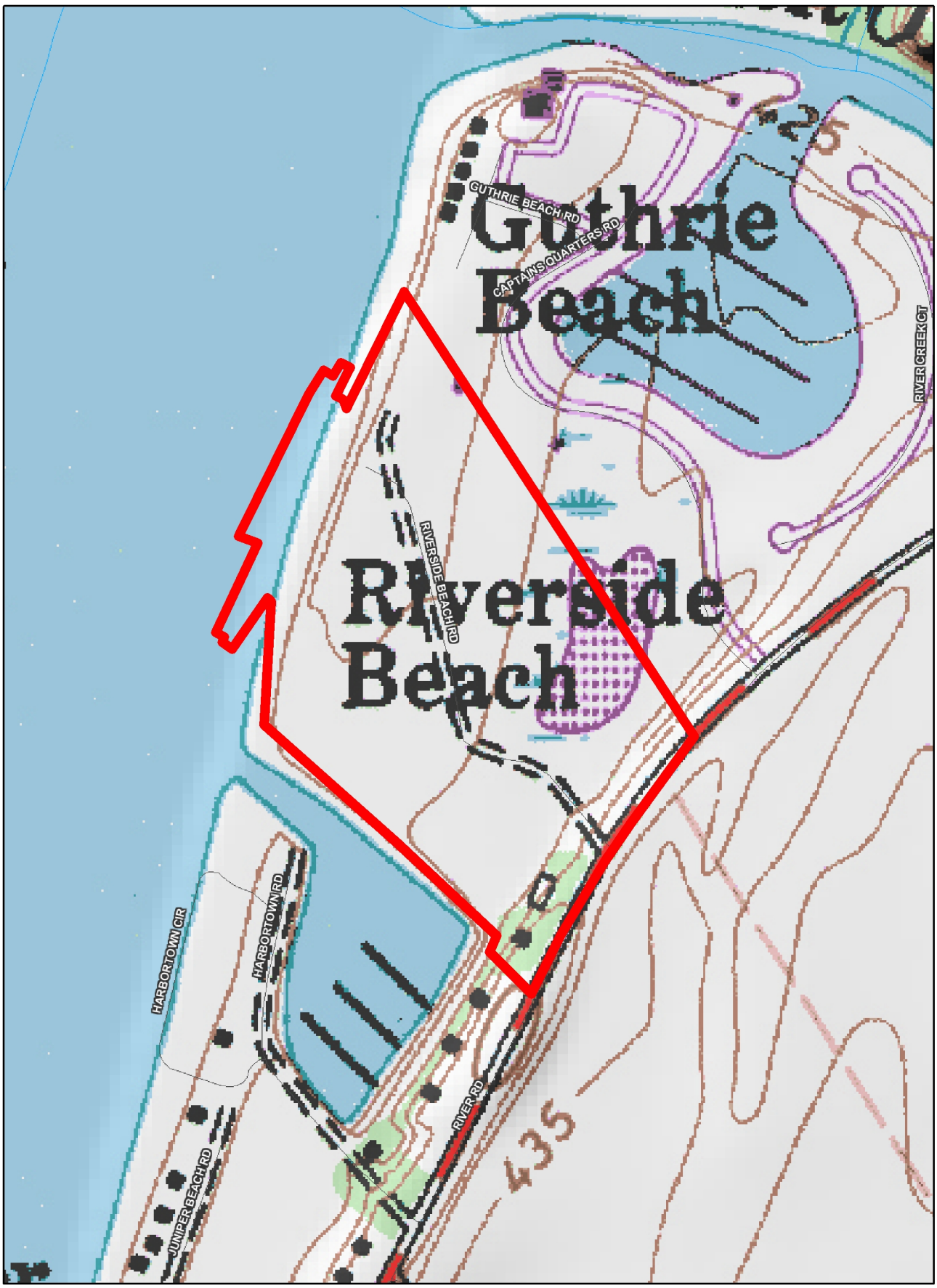
CHAD M

N

0 140 280 560 840 1,120

Feet

Jeffersonville, KY/IN Quadrangle

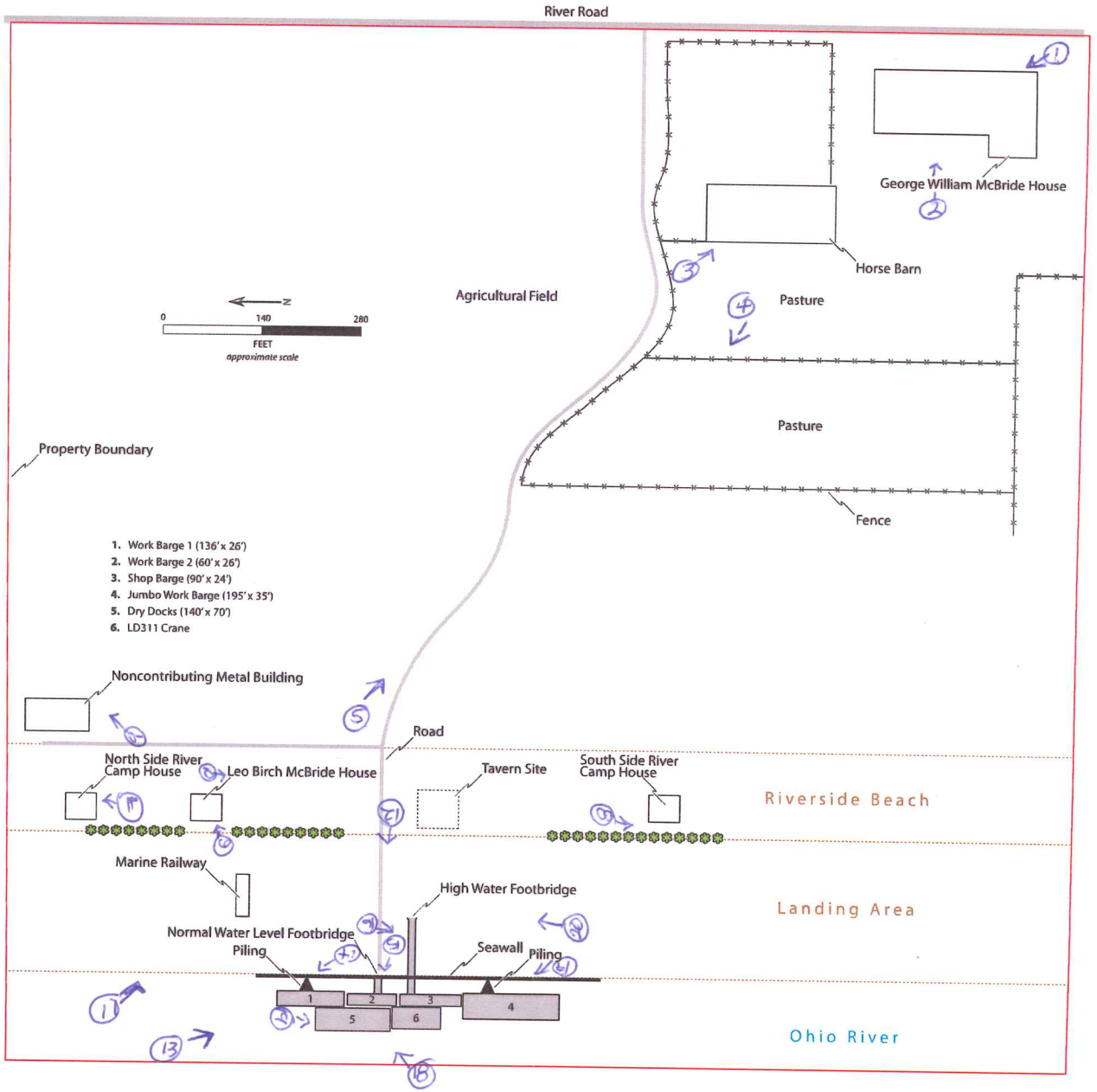


N

0 137.5 275 550 825 1,100

Feet

Jeffersonville, KY/IN Quadrangle


River Road
George William McBride House
Horse Barn
Agricultural Field
Pasture
Pasture
Property Boundary
Fence
0
140
280
FEET
approximate scale
1. Work Barge 1 (136' x 26')
2. Work Barge 2 (60' x 26')
3. Shop Barge (90' x 24')
4. Jumbo Work Barge (195' x 35')
5. Dry Docks (140' x 70')
6. LD311 Crane
Noncontributing Metal Building
Road
North Side River Camp House
Leo Birch McBride House
Tavern Site
South Side River Camp House
Riverside Beach
Marine Railway
High Water Footbridge
Landing Area
Normal Water Level Footbridge
Piling
Seawall
Piling
1
2
3
4
5
6
Ohio River

River Road

George William McBride House

Horse Barn

Agricultural Field

Pasture

Pasture

Fence

N

0 140 280

FEET

approximate scale

Property Boundary

1. Work Barge 1 (136′ x 26′)
2. Work Barge 2 (60′ x 26′)
3. Shop Barge (90′ x 24′)
4. Jumbo Work Barge (195′ x 35′)
5. Dry Docks (140′ x 70′)
6. LD311 Crane

Noncontributing Metal Building

Road

North Side River Camp House

Leo Birch McBride House

Tavern Site

South Side River Camp House

Riverside Beach

Marine Railway

High Water Footbridge

Landing Area

Normal Water Level Footbridge

Piling

Seawall

Piling

1 2 3 4 5 6

Ohio River

George William McBride House, facade

George William McBride House, rear elevation

Horse barn, north and west elevations

Horse barn, west and south elevations

Lane leading to River Road and G.W. McBride House and Horse Barn, looking southeast

Riverside Beach, looking south

Leo Birch McBride House, façade (river side)

Leo Birch McBride House, east and north elevations

North side river camp house

South side river camp house

Riverside Beach, as seen from river

Lane leading from Riverside Beach to Landing

McBride’s Harrods Creek Landing

McBride’s Harrods Creek Landing

Marine railway

Work barge 1

Work barge 2

Shop barge

Jumbo work barge

Dry docks, as seen from river

Work barge 1 at left, dry docks at right

Crane (in dry docks)